Technology and the Culture of Progress in Meiji Japan by David G. Wittner
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capital seemingly occupies relatively flat land, contrary to my own recollection of the actual region as being on a slope and also contradicted by the author's own description: "Instead of leveling the whole area, the different sectors of the Nagaoka palace enclosure were leveled separately, creating different plateaus upon which the various government facilities were constructed" (p. 171). Where are the plateaus in the illustration?

Nagaoka both delights and frustrates. Because I already had an interest in the Nagaoka capital, this book answered many questions. If you have a curiosity about the Nagaoka capital, Van Goethem's book is a tremendous resource with much to offer.

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Technology and the Culture of Progress in Meiji Japan. By David G. Wittner. New York: Routledge, 2008. xix, 199 pp. $150.00 (cloth).
doi:10.1017/S0021911809001041

The relationship between modernization, Westernization, and national identity is a central question in the study of Meiji Japan. It forms a core component in works as diverse as Mark Ravina's *The Last Samurai* (Hoboken, N.J.: Wiley, 2005) on Saigō Takamori; Stefan Tanaka's *New Times for Modern Japan* (Princeton, N. J.: Princeton University Press, 2004), which examines time and modernization; and Gerald Figal's *Civilization and Monsters* (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 1999), about the impact of modernization on folklore. David Wittner provides us with an examination of this issue from the perspective of technological choices and the materiality of civilization. In other words, he explains the mind-set of the Meiji oligarchy as it determined the path of progress. He makes the argument that all the things that historians have faulted the Meiji government for, such as inefficient use of finances, make perfect sense in the context of national pride and the pursuit of Victorian civilization. The silk industry and the iron industry, light and heavy industries, are offered as case studies because they "are revealing about the attitudes the government had toward each sector" (p. 2).

The history of technology is a fairly underpopulated field in North American Japanese studies. This is partly attributable to the ebbs and flows of academic fashion, but also attributable to the fact that it requires facility in a number of disparate skill sets, including the ability to write, language ability, and a genuine understanding of technology. While most Japanologists have the first two, it is in his ease with the last that makes Wittner an exception. In his presentations of silk and iron technologies, even the most technically inept, such as this writer, can understand not only the nuts and bolts of how the machines worked, but also why this understanding is relevant. One way technology is made germane is by connecting the history of technology to the theoretical

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concepts of material culture, a significant intellectual leap that, when accomplished, seems obvious but in reality bridges what had been a deep intellectual crevice.

Perhaps because greater specificity would have been cumbersome, the Meiji in the title really only refers to the nineteenth century. This is in part because the era of government-sponsored pursuit of Western civilization (*bunmei kaika*, or "civilization and enlightenment") is usually seen as ending in the 1890s, and in part because of the shift away from government involvement and back to the private sector after the Matsukata deflation of 1881–85. The introductory chapter skillfully weaves theoretical approaches with modernization and progress, technological development, and material culture into a surprisingly coherent whole. The second chapter is also essentially an introductory chapter, providing background on silk reeling, iron smelting, and mining techniques in Japan before the Meiji period.

The following chapters provide the case studies of silk and of iron. In chapter 3, on silk, we are shown that the Meiji government rejected many of the cost-saving measures that advisor Paul Brunat recommended that would have "reduced capital expenditures and increased productivity" (p. 50) at the iconic Tomioka filature. Comparison with Hayami Kenzō, who advocated hybridized (traditional and imported) methods, shows that despite the extensive trumpeting of Tomioka as the wave of the future, "the majority of the mechanization … was based on local initiative and locally produced machines" (p. 54). The reason for the decision to use iron machinery and expensive Westernized facilities was a belief in "the ability of transferred technological artifacts to impart cultural and social value" (p. 71).

The following chapter on the iron industry shows how opposite actions by the government ironically brought about similar results. A lack of foreign interest in iron production meant that there was little attached prestige and thus little outside scrutiny. Translations of the conflicting proposals by foreign advisor Louis Bianchi and local expert Ōshima Takato for building sites for the Kamaishi Ironworks are provided in appendix I. As a result, the government could rely much more heavily on foreign advisors without loss of face, a significant issue in a new government. Nevertheless, unlike the silk industry, success in the iron industry was illusive and did not occur until the twentieth century. To some extent, the different results between these two industries are related to the complexity of their mechanization. Textiles are generally the vanguard of industrial revolution because production of raw materials and weaving are relatively simple processes, while producing iron in the nineteenth century was still a process of "trial and error" (p. 93).

Chapter 5 is essentially a conclusion because it ends the story of technological determinism in the late Meiji period, although a short, final conclusion that summarizes the arguments in the book follows it. Here, Wittner puts the detailed developments of the previous two chapters into the context of the Meiji mind-set of civilization and enlightenment to elucidate the reasoning behind the choices that were made in selecting and discarding technology. Wittner suggests that this common endpoint for technological determinism is shortsighted; in his view, it continued to shape government policy.

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With the exception of the introduction and final chapter, the argument is presented with dense, empirical evidence that must represent many hours of archival drudgery. This is perhaps a strength and a weakness. For the historian, the details are a goldmine of primary source material, but even though the book is clearly written, a glossary is provided, and every effort has been made to provide context and maps, it will be difficult for the uninitiated to follow the story through the forest of facts. However, unless a paperback edition is issued, the question of assigning this book to undergraduates is made moot by the price. If not in its unadulterated form, Wittner's iconoclastic challenge to Darwinist perceptions of Meiji industrial development should nevertheless be incorporated into analysis and teaching about Meiji Japan. Gap filling is often disparaged as insufficient motivation for research, but this book shows that it is can be more than an exercise in historical OCD. Holes in research that are filled as carefully as Wittner has done can recast views repeated for generations that have rested upon faulty foundations.

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SOUTH ASIA

The South Indian Pentecostal Movement in the Twentieth Century. Studies in the History of Christian Missions. By Michael Bergunder. Grand Rapids, Mich.: William B. Eerdmans, 2008. xii, 1 pp. $40.00 (paper).
doi:10.1017/S0021911809001053

In recent years, there has been a marked improvement and increase in scholarly writing on Christianity in South Asia. More recent works written by scholars such as Rowena Robinson, Mathew Schmalz, and the late D. Dennis Hudson have moved beyond earlier studies that were mostly historical, semihagiographical, and/or denominational. The tools of anthropology, religious studies, and area studies have helped shed new light on Christianity in South Asia and beyond, fruitfully demonstrating the agency of indigenous peoples as well as points of interaction and exchange between religious communities. There is in this postcolonial era a move away from mission histories toward the study of contemporary instantiations of what is now called "world Christianity," or of what this reviewer prefers to call "global Christianities." Michael Bergunder's work can be situated within this newer milieu, although it lacks some of the analytical depth of these other works. Nevertheless, the book fills a serious lacuna in our knowledge of Pentecostalism in South India, some 20 percent of the region's Protestant Christian population—and growing.

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